



The Riddle of Steel

The Law of the jungle states that only the Smartest, Strongest or Swiftest survive. In general, Speed trumps Strength almost every time and no weapon is faster than the Human Brain.

Speed, through kinetics, generates its own Strength as the Peregrine Falcon proves, generating the kinetic energy in a power dive equivalent to that of a rampaging Bull Elephant making it, potentially, the deadliest Predator on the Planet.

Point being, a lighter blade swung faster is practically the same as a heavy blade swung slower both generating, basically, the same amount of kinetic energy. So, who's gonna win the fight? Yeah, the person with the quickest blade.

Originally, when sword fighting began, they had no armor so they used shields which became the armor. For this reason, the sword that was designed was the Short Sword which was used, therefore, with one hand in very close combat.

When body armor arose (chain mail, etc), this freed up the other arm so longer, heavier and stronger swords were made which also increased the distance between combatants.

These are, basically, the only two types of swords and if you master one Long Sword, you can use any Long Sword as the principles are the same and it is simply a matter of physics (kinetic energy) and geometry (angle of attack). [**1 Katana vs Longsword**](#)

This is true of curved blades as well, which is just a Long Sword subsequently designed for fighting from horseback (by thinning the width of the blade to lighten the load for one handed fighting) and which, on the ground, once again became a two handed sword which is still reflected in their training to this day. The same fighting principles, precisely, are true of Short Swords and possibly of long & short staves as well in their various forms (spears, javelins etc).

Significantly, for this study, the Long Sword, for all practical purposes, becomes the equivalent of a Short Sword when used properly by both hands which becomes slower, potentially, than the Short Sword (negative kinetics) albeit with more control (positive geometry via "leverage").

When answering the basic question of which sword is the best sword for fighting, the professional answer is that it depends upon the circumstances (armor, single or multiple opponents, mounted or grounded, ability of combatants, etc); however, the realistic answer is, nine times out of ten, the quickest sword is the best sword and there is, really, no significant argument against this.

One deciding factor in this regard, with all other factors being equal, is how long does it take to press your sword into service by freeing it from its scabbard? [2 Self Defense at its best](#)

The Foil is the quickest blade but it takes a coon's age to draw if you were to keep it in a scabbard which usually wasn't the case as it was never designed for actual fighting (ditto the Rapier which negates the Iberian *Destreza* both Professional and Vulgar as far as reality is concerned) which is why it is not the strongest blade and probably wouldn't hold up well with prolonged use in a battlefield environment over extended periods of time like in a Post Apocalyptic World when the gunpowder has salt petered out.

Point being, why would you waste your time learning how to use a rich boy's toy when your life may depend on the amount of time you have invested training with a real weapon? In this regard, Tradition can be an expensive Mistress especially if you have to pay up with your Life. Consider Bruce Lee's statement that he wasn't afraid of an adept in multiple weapons but the guy who chose to master only one which was certainly not an idle boast on his part or spoken off the cuff. [3 Bruce Lee playing Ping Pong with Nunchucks](#)

Some might suggest here that if you train with a Long Sword you can also use a Short Sword but not vice versa to which I would suggest to you (after I've pointed out that you'll be gasping for breath after five minutes anyways cause that's what your body is used to, so all I have to do is wait it out *) that you will not be adept at fighting in close quarters and your timing will be off which would not be as true for the Short Sword combatant who can create space with a Long Sword, instinctively, due to this very unfamiliarity. This is, primarily, a psychological advantage as any physical advantage is practically negated between the two.

**That and the fact that I really don't give a shit about fighting or training with a Long Sword.*

A comparison could be made, to illustrate this, between wrestling and boxing which are the two dominant disciplines in the MMA arena (respectively) where the close quarter wrestler is in his element but the boxer is not. Reversing the roles does not frustrate or intimidate the wrestler (it actually gives him a breather) but it does the boxer which is amplified exponentially when it is a life or death situation.

Another factor affecting the choice of the best sword is weight as with a Viking Long Sword which looks tough and cool and all but its slower than hell and will wear you out in fifteen minutes (or less!?!). If you want an eye opening object lesson about fighting with a Long Sword just watch a video on the Medieval Sword fights and see for yourself just how quickly these people are gasping for breath and, just remember while you are watching this that they are using fake blades

that do not weigh as much as the real thing (my link title says it all and that's a quote). [4 Make him puke!](#)

This is the conservation of energy factor which, in a protracted fight, may be the difference between life and death. But, at least you'll look cool when they bury you with it (same thing exactly applies to long hair according to both King David and Alexander the Great) and the womenfolk will sing their songs about you for generations as with Achilles in all his glory.

So, from a Sigma Male's perspective, it comes down to either the Katana or Gladius. Now, consider that you can use a Gladius with or without a Shield but, with the Katana, the Shield would actually be a detriment and, possibly, get you killed because the Katana was not designed to be used with one hand on foot but with both hands which is incorporated into their training.

It is, therefore, probably not insignificant that the Gladius Sword ruled the World for over 500 years if not a couple thousand, considering it came from the Iberians who, assuredly, got it from the Egyptians in the days of Joseph (see photos below in ascending order respectively).



There are several benefits to this position that I have seen and one is that most Katana style swords are single bladed, cutting in half your chances of survival. Why the hell would you choose a single bladed sword in a fight to the death? Doesn't make much sense does it?

Further, you can use a Gladio (ie like a Gladius) on horseback as well as on foot (most notably the Iberian with its flowing straight blade) whereas all curved blades were not specifically designed for both styles of fighting which is why the Samurai carried two swords with the longer one for horseback and the shorter one for groundwork. The Roman position is that of a Cavalier knocked off his horse in the middle of close quarters combat where even the simple process of switching swords might get you killed.

It is the Samurai's practice of using two swords that led to most Disciplines, that actually train with two swords, to subsequently go with one long and one short

such as the Medieval Iberian Sword and Dagger where the Dagger is just a pussified Gladius (or a wanna be knife). [5 That's a Knife!](#)

Taking that particular stance is to misunderstand the origins and practical usefulness of each blade individually and, therefore, in tandem. This is not very professional, to say the least, and any instructor who does not recognize this important distinction is certainly not an expert, which as far as I can tell, is most of them. In all fairness, this is to be expected since sword fighting has been out of vogue for a while.

The long sword was never designed for use with one hand and is unwieldy especially in a prolonged fight. The modern day object lesson would be using a rifle in close quarters. It may work but becomes increasingly detrimental in direct proportion to the amount of opponents there are that are trying to kill you before you kill them. [6 Mighty White Hunter](#)

Along the lines of martial multitasking, the Gladio is designed for both slashing and stabbing whereas the Katana, and all curved blades, were designed for slashing with stabbing being a secondary thought almost en passant it seems. Here is where geometry comes into play as the quickest way between two points being that straight jab which the Romans used so effectively with that straight sword which is a much more effective channel of kinetic energy than a one edged curved sword. That alone is virtually conclusive for any Realist.

If you are going to use a reverse grip, though not recommended, it is much simpler and quicker and more effective to stab using the Gladio than any other sword in existence. Combine that with two swords and we begin to see the benefits of this position, another of which becomes the ability to trap your opponent's weapon momentarily which, if utilized to one's advantage, may save your life.

One expert pointed this out and suggested that you should just block with one and stab with the other simultaneously but he was using two Long Swords from a distance with more time to react whereas two Short Swords would allow that trap to be used to the wielder's advantage, literally, in a split second. [7 Thai dual Swords](#)

A survivalist could not understand why the Romans settled on using a Gladius. If he were a tennis player he might have figured it out which, by the way, is exceptional training (Bruce Lee style) for a straight Short Sword, especially if you add some weight to it making it feel like a Long Sword, which would nullify the previously mentioned deficiency in training with this type of blade as opposed to that of a Long Blade.

The Survivalist determined that it was not meant to be a stand alone weapon and then the very next video I happened to watch showed a Gladio defeat a Longsword on at least two attacks thus putting the lie to his uninformed opinion. [8 Gladio vs Longsword](#)

What this individual did not realize is that they chose that exact length because you avoid hitting the ground with the tip when fighting which is another benefit from this blade and which is true of almost no other weapon and which increases one's chance of victory on the Gladiatorial Battlefield immeasurably because it virtually doubles the geometric versatility and kinetic potential of your attack.

So, what is the conclusion of the matter?

Well, if you're in a fight to the death with a sword against a single opponent, and you know your sword, your chances of winning with a Gladio is probably just as good as, if not even better than, a Katana or any other weapon.

But, guess what?

Chances are, if you are fighting someone with a sword, then the manure has hit the rotary oscillator and you won't be fighting just one person with a sword but you and your buddies will be fighting a whole army of other swordsmen, in very close quarters, in a free for all from hell, where the Law of the Jungle reigns supreme, and the Katana was simply not designed for such close quarter engagements with enemies on every side as was the Gladius.

In a Real World situation, outside the safety and security of your Hero's Dojo, guess who is going to win nine times out of ten...